

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 087475
ORIGIN IO-13

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
INFO AMEMBASSY PARIS

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 087475

NESCO

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS:AORG, UNESCO

SUBJECT:UNESCO: JERUSALEM EXCAVATIONS

1. DEPT UNDERSTANDS THAT PROFESSOR MAZAR'S EXCAVATIONS, WHICH APPARENTLY WERE THE MOST IMPORTANT OF THOSE BEING CONDUCTED IN JERUSALEM, HAVE BEEN TERMINATED. WE HAVE ALSO BEEN INFORMED (BY BAR-ON, THE COUNSELOR OF THE ISRAELI EMBASSY HERE) THAT THE GOI WOULD NOT RPT NOT MAKE A STATEMENT ON THE MAZAR DIGS.

2. EMBASSY WILL RECALL THAT THE 18TH GC (1974) REQUESTED THE DIRECTOR GENERAL TO WITHHOLD FURTHER ASSISTANCE FROM ISRAEL (AMOUNTING TO ABOUT 12,500 DOLLARS A YEAR) UNTIL THE GOI CONFORMS TO A NUMBER OF PREVIOUS RESOLUTIONS CRITICAL OF ITS POLICIES TOWARD THE OLD CITY OF JERUSALEM. ALTHOUGH THE EXCAVATIONS WERE ONLY ONE OF THE ITEMS
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CRITICIZED, THEY HAVE BECOME THE FOCUS OF ATTENTION IN THIS MATTER. IT WAS THE SANCTION CONTAINED IN THE SUSPENSION OF ASSISTANCE TO ISRAEL MORE THAN ANY OTHER ACT THAT RESULTED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL CUTOFF OF FUNDS UNDER THE CASE-BINGHAM AMENDMENT. IF SOME KIND OF NOTICE COULD BE GIVEN THE DIRECTOR GENERAL OF UNESCO THAT THE MAZAR EXCAVATIONS HAVE BEEN TERMINATED, THERE IS A SLIGHT POSSIBILITY THAT HE

WOULD BE WILLING TO LIFT THE SANCTION.

3. IF EMBASSY PERCEIVES NO OBJECTION, DEPT WOULD LIKE IT TO SOUND OUT GOI INFORMALLY TO SEE IF IT WOULD BE WILLING TO CONVEY TO THE UNESCO DIRECTOR GENERAL BY SOME INDIRECT MEANS THE WORD THAT THE MAZAR EXCAVATIONSHAVE BEEN TERMINATED. FOR EXAMPLE, IT MIGHT BE POSSIBLE FOR A PERSON IN A POSITION OF AUTHORITY IN THE GOI--THE ISRAELI AMBASSADOR TO THE UN, FOR EXAMPLE .-TO STATE TO A PERSON IN A POSITION OF AUTHORITY FROM SOME OTHER UNESCO MEMBER STATE THAT THESE EXCAVATIONS HAVE BEEN TERMINATED. THE LATTER PERSON, WHO COULD BE AN AMERICAN OR A REPRESENTATIVE OF ANOTHER STATE FRIENDLY TO ISRAEL, COULD THEN INFORM THE UNESCO DIRECTOR GENERAL, WHO MIGHT BE ABLE TO TAKE OFFICIAL COGNIZANCE OF THE NOTICE.

4. DEPT REALIZES THAT THERE IS ONLY A SMALL CHANCE THAT SUCH A MOVE COULD SUCCEED, BUT SINCE THERE HAS BEEN ALMOST NO FORWARD MOTION IN UNESCO ON THIS ISSUE OVER THE PAST TWO AND ONE-HALF YEARS, WE WOULD FIND IT USEFUL TO PUT EVEN A SMALL WEDGE INTO THE LOG JAM.

VANCE

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Sent Date: 19-Apr-1977 12:00:00 am
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